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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8883
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 8697
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 1244
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0344
RUEHBV/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 0026
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ PRIORITY 0324
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0323
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 0316
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHLC/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAAIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000336

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC,
CA/OCS/ACS/AF FOR MESARITI
ZAGREB FOR AMBASSADOR BRADTKE
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON
DOE FOR GPERSON, CAROLYN GAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELDS
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2017

TAGS: ASEC CASC EPET KDEM NI PGOV PREL

SUBJECT: SITREP 9: FIVE AMCITS REMAIN HOSTAGES; COMPANY
REPS TO MEET WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

REF: A. LAGOS 331

B. LAGOS 322

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Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Four American citizens abducted from Global Industries' Cheyenne barge on May 8 remain hostages. Company representatives planned to meet Delta State Secretary and Governor-elect Emmanuel Uduaghan later today, May 11. One hostage, Amcit Faller, told his wife via cell phone the camp the four Amcits were being held was less tense after the captors learned the military would not intervene (he did not say how this came to be known). He predicted Amcit hostages might be released over the weekend. American citizen John Stapleton, four Italians, and one Croatian employed by Chevron remain hostages after being kidnapped on May 1. Fred Nelson, Chevron's Managing Director, planned to meet Governor Goodluck Jonathan later today. End Summary.

¶12. (SBU) Four American citizens employed by Global Industries (GI), Kevin Faller, Christopher Gay, Michael Rousell, and Larry Plake, remain hostages after being abducted off the shore of Delta State near Escravos on May 8.

A representative from Clayton Associates, a U.S. based security company, arrived in Nigeria on May 10 and will advise GI on this incident. GI has scheduled a May 11 meeting with Secretary to the State Government (SSG) and Delta State Governor-elect, Emmanuel Uduaghan.

¶13. (C) On May 10, ACS unit chief spoke to Mrs. Plake and Mrs. Faller. Neither Mr. Plake nor Mr. Faller have any health conditions and they are not taking any medication. Mrs. Faller said her husband discussed the possibility of a kidnapping approximately three weeks ago (about the time militant activity increased near the elections). He told her to be prepared to record phone calls from him in that event. She had therefore recorded three conversations with her husband between May 9 and 10. Faller said he was being permitted two telephone calls a day. Faller called his wife the evening of May 9, and told her the militants had said "Any attempt to be violent in their (the hostages) return will be destructive (sic); respect the order and wishes of the people who are in charge of our lives; we need a peaceful solution; as such our company (Global Industries) should respond immediately or else..." Mrs. Faller said it sounded as if he was reading a prepared (or ill-prepared) statement.

¶14. (C) When Faller called the following morning, his voice had a sense of urgency and he demanded that something be done to secure his release. Apparently he was being prompted by the kidnappers who, themselves, fended over a possible military attack. During his second call that day, he said

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the atmosphere in the camp had calmed somewhat since the kidnappers found out the military would not attack. Faller was under the impression the four American hostages would be released on May 12 or May 13.

Bayelsa/Chevron: Chevron MD to Meet Governor Jonathan

¶15. (C) On May 11, American citizen John Stapleton, four Italian nationals, and one Croatian began their eleventh day in captivity. Chevron Managing Director Fred Nelson told the Chevron crisis group he had a meeting scheduled with Governor Goodluck Jonathan that day to express thanks for Bayelsa's continued assistance. The crisis group had not confirmed delivery of the welfare packages provided the Bayelsa State Government over the past week. However, Chevron plans to continue passing medication, clothing, and family letters to the government in hopes they are being distributed to the hostages.

Comment

¶16. (C) The purported kidnappers in both the GI and Chevron cases have made both political and financial demands. GI has received demands for all expatriates to depart Nigeria and for Chevron to pay the (unnamed) community "whatever it is owed." (Ref A) In Chevron's case, the kidnappers also demanded the release of Victor Ebikabowei's brother and naira 500 million (approximately USD 4 million). (Ref B) Our interlocutors have suggested these and other recent attacks in the Niger Delta have been perpetrated to embarrass President Obasanjo, but the criminal factor in these attacks is also apparent. A turf war between competing Delta and Bayelsa militants further complicates the picture. (Ref B)
End Comment.

BROWNE